Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 04 MAY 2006

Message Text

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PAGE 01 DACCA 06135 040308Z

22
ACTION NEA-10

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-04 H-02 INR-07 L-03

NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15 USIA-06 OMB-01

TRSE-00 ACDA-07 IO-13 AID-05 /083 W
---------- 126454
R 031037Z DEC 76
FM AMEMBASSY DACCA
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 2851
INFO AMCONSUL CALCUTTA
AMEMBASSY NEW DELHI
AMEMBASSY ISLAMABAD

C O N F I D E N T I A L DACCA 6135

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: PINT, SOPN, BG
SUBJECT: GENERAL ZIA'S ADDRESS TO NATION

1. GENERAL ZIA GAVE HIS FIRST SPEECH TO THE NATION AS CHIEF MARTIAL LAW ADMINISTRATOR WEDNESDAY EVENING, DECEMBER 1. THE ADDRESS APPEARED TO BE A POLICY STATEMENT COVERING A WIDE RANGE OF DOMESTIC AND FOREIGN CONCERNS. THE SPEECH WAS NOT, AS HAD FIRST BEEN SUPECTED, THE TRADITIONAL EID ADDRESS GIVEN BY THE HEAD OF STATE; PRESIDENT SAYEM GAVE THAT ADRESS FOLLOWING GENERAL ZIA'S SPEECH.BECAUSE NO NEWSPAPERS HAVE BEEN PUBLISHED DURING THE EID HOLIDAY, THE FOLLOWING SUMMARY HAS BEEN PREPARED BY THE POLITICAL SECTION'S LOCAL EMPLOYEE.

2. THE MAJOR POINTS OF ZIA'S SPEECH:

-- AT THE REQUEST OF VARIOUS POLITICAL PARTIES THE GOVERNMENT DECIDED TO POSTPONE THE GENERAL ELECTIONS. THE UNION PARISHAD ELECTIONS WOULD BE HELD IN THE SECOND WEEK OF JANUARY FOLLOWED BY THANA AND DISTRICT COUNCIL ELECTIONS. IN THIS PHASE-BY-PHASE
CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 02 DACCA 06135 040308Z

PROCESS THE GROUND FOR NATIONAL ELECTIONS WOULD BE

Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 04 MAY 2006

Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 04 MAY 2006

CREATED.
-- A TENSE SITUATION PREVAILS ALONG THE BORDER
AREAS BECAUSE OF RAIDS FROM ACROSS THE BORDER. THE
BDG IS DETERMINED TO WIPE OUT THE YOUTHS WHO HAVE
TAKEN SHELTER IN INDIA AND RECEIVE TRAINING AND SUP-
PORT THERE.
-- BANGLADESH IS DETERMINED TO FIND A JUST SOLU-
TION TO THE FARAKKA PROBLEM. BOTH BILATERAL AND INTER-
NATIONAL EFFORTS ARE CONTINUING TO ACHIEVE THIS END.
-- BANGLADESH'S NEUTRAL FOREIGN POLICY HAS BEEN AC-
CLAIMED ABORAD. TODAY, BANGLADESHIS
ARE NOT ALONE NOR WITHOUT FRIENDS. THE GOVERNMENT IS
DETERMINED TO UPHOLD NATIONAL INDEPENDENCE AND SOVER-
EIGNTY AT ANY COST, AND WILL FRUSTRATE WITH STRONG
HANDS ANY ANTI-STATE ACTIVITIES BY ANY PERSON OR ANY
PARTY WITH PROVOCATIONS FROM FOREIGN COUNTRIES.

3. IN ADDITION TO THE MAIN POINTS ABOVE, ZIA OUT-
LINED THE VARIOUS PROGRAMS HIS GOVERNMENT WOULD CONTINUE
TO PURSUE IN THE EDUCATIONAL, SOCIAL, LABOR AND
ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT FIELDS AND POINTED TO THE PRESENT
ADEQUATE SUPPLY OF ESSENTIALS SUCH AS FOOD AND CLOTH.

4. COMMENT: ZIA'S TONE WAS REPORTEDLY CALM, REASSUR-
ING AND AUTHORITATIVE. HE APPEARED TO WISH TO PROJECT
AN ATMOSPHERE OF CONTINUITY AND STABILITY. HE DID
NOT REFER SPECIFICALLY TO HIS ASSUMPTION OF GREATER
POWER OR TO THE ARREST OF ELEVEN PROMINENT POLITICIANS.
ALTHOUGH HE DID RAISE THE SPECTRE OF INDIA, THIS TYPE
OF REFERENCE IS FAIRLY USUAL IN ZIA'S MAJOR SPEECHES.
HIS SPEECH WAS A WIDE-RANGING "STATE OF THE UNION"
TYPE AND ACCORDING TO OUR CONTACTS WAS WELL RECEIVED
HERE AS ZIA PROJECTED HIS SELF-DESIRED IMAGE AS A
STRONG LEADER.

5. GENERAL ZIA REPEATED HIS WORDS OF REASSURANCE PER-
SONALLY TO THE AMBASSADOR THE FOLLOWING DAY WHEN THE
AMBASSADOR CALLED ON HIM TO CONVEY EID GREETINGS.
HE FELT CONVINCED, ZIA SAID, THAT THE EVENTS OF THE WEEK WOULD
STRENGTHEN THE GOVERNMENT SO THAT IT COULD MORE EF-
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FECTIVELY CARRY OUT ITS PROGRAMS.
MASTERS

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Margaret P. Grafeld
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